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ABSTRACT

In 1987, the Ohio Department of Education enacted a new policy requiring all school districts to plan and implement programs designed to provide support to newly hired professional educators. The mandate's intent was to ensure that inexperienced teachers, counselors, social workers, psychologists, supervisors, or administrators hired to work in Ohio school districts would have access to conditions creating a supportive environment for succeeding at their new jobs. This paper discusses the support systems available to supervisors, vocational education directors, and administrators. The Entry Year Standard also requires the designation of experienced school administrators to serve as career guides or mentors for beginning administrators. Two primary issues underlie this standard's enactment: (1) a perceived need for new administrators to enter the field; and (2) recognition that many realities facing new administrators must be learned on the job. A primary task of the Ohio LEAD (Leadership in Educational Administration Development) Center is to develop implementation strategies for local school systems. The LEAD Center's work on the Entry Year Standard has revolved around two tasks: developing a "Resource Guide" to help program implementors and providing training concerning the mentoring concept. A brief overview of resource guide contents is provided. An appendix presents the Ohio Entry Year Standard. (MLH)

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RESOURCE GUIDE FOR FIRST YEAR ADMINISTRATORS IN OHIO

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RESOURCE GUIDE FOR FIRST YEAR

ADMINISTRATORS IN OHIO

In 1987, the Ohio Department of Education enacted a new policy that required all school districts within the state to plan and carry out programs that are designed to provide support to newly-hired professional educators. The explicit intent of this mandate was to make certain that individuals who were hired as teachers, counselors, social workers, psychologists, supervisors, or administrators in any one of the 615 school districts across Ohio, and without previous experience in the position for which they were hired, would have access to conditions that would create a supportive environment that could make it more likely that a person would succeed in a new job.

The Entry Year Standard has therefore grown out of a perceived need by the majority of educational practitioners across the state of Ohio and who gave feedback to the Department of Education that it would be advisable to design approaches to helping beginning colleagues. The individual features of the Entry Year Program reflect the concerns of school personnel who sincerely want to see educational improvement derived from the improvement of educational leaders. A statement of the complete Ohio Entry Year Standard is included as an appendix to this paper.

As the chart in Figure 1 indicates, the Ohio Entry Year Standard suggests that school districts which employ certificated educational personnel without previous experience need to develop formal plans which include seven components:

1. A statement of assurances signed by the superintendent and filed with the Ohio Department of Education indicating that the district has complied with the Entry Year Standard.
2. A statement of the local approach designed to address the Entry Year Standard.
3. Specifications for a method used to provide new employees with a specific orientation to the expectations and practices of the employing school system.
4. A process for the identification, training, and assigning of mentors for new employees.
5. A statement describing how the local entry-year program fits a larger local effort designed to enhance ongoing professional development of the district staff.
6. A strategy for self-evaluation of the program at the district level.
7. Commitment to participate in a formal state evaluation of the local program every five years.

FIGURE 1 HERE

Although the Entry Year Standard calls for programs to be provided to all beginning professional educators, and the requirements listed above apply to programs for teachers, counselors, social workers, psychologists, nurses, supervisors, and administrators, the work that we describe in this paper has been directed only at the support systems that have been made available to supervisors, vocational education directors, and administrators (at the building and central office levels).

A significant part of the Entry Year Standard calls for the designation of experienced school administrators to serve as career guides, or mentors, for beginning administrators. We often describe this mentoring function as the "engine that drives the rest of the entry year program" (Daresh, Conran, & Playko, 1989). While considerably greater detail regarding the precise nature of administrative mentoring might be found in other works (Daresh & Playko, 1989), we offer only two broad observations here regarding this important activity. First, we believe that it is critical that mentors should have had successful experience in the specific roles in which they are mentoring. Second, mentors must be provided with sufficient training and time so that they are able to carry out their

mentoring duties as effectively as possible.

Rationale for the Entry Year Standard

Two primary issues underly the enactment of the Ohio Entry Year Standard. First, there has been a rather clear recognition that, in the next few years, there will be a need for many new school administrators to enter the field. For example, the Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators has estimated that as many as 50% of the state's elementary school principals may retire within the next five years. Similar descriptions have been offered in many other states. It is possible that this turnover will not be quite this high, but it is clear that many newly-hired school administrators will be called upon to join the field for the first time in the next few years.

The second issue addresses the concern that many realities facing new administrators cannot always be dealt with in the context of a college or university preservice preparation program. Many things need to be learned on the job. There must be planned learning experiences provided to people when they take their first jobs, or there will continue to be significant problems with "reality shock" during the first few years on a job.

There is no single "Entry Year Model" that has been mandated for adoption across the state of Ohio. Beginning administrators encounter unique problems on the job. School systems are expected to look at their own needs, characteristics, and priorities as a way to devise program that fit the needs of their particular districts. This lack of prescription has led to some frustration on the part of some leaders across the state as they attempt to fulfill the terms of the mandate. Little direction has been provided to school districts regarding the precise nature of the overall Entry Year Program. This is largely a function of the fact that the Department of Education has long held that local control of schools is a high priority. Systems across the state do not typically resist the notion that ongoing support should be available to new school personnel. However, there is a recognition that, because most school districts will not hire many new school administrators at any one time, it may be difficult to develop local, comprehensive induction training programs. This is one of the primary reasons why the mandated Entry Year Standard has become a central activity of the Ohio LEAD Center.

The Ohio LEAD Center

In 1986, the U.S. Department of Education announced that it would make approximately $7 million in funding available to assist

states in developing programs designed to promote programs and activities that would be useful to practicing and aspiring school administrators. What followed was the creation of LEAD (Leadership in Educational Administration Development) Centers in each of the 50 states. No nationwide model was prescribed for the Centers to follow, other than the fact that they should represent efforts to bring together practitioners of school administration, their professional associations, state education agencies, and colleges and universities in developing strategies and activities designed to enhance the preservice and inservice learning opportunities available for school leaders.

In Ohio, the proposal submitted to the U.S. Department of Education called for the LEAD Center to serve as a linkage agent that would unite the efforts of the state department of education, professional associations (elementary and secondary principal, superintendent, and school board groups), and the universities which were chartered to provide preservice preparation programs to certify administrative candidates in the state. A governing board was formed, and an executive staff was named soon after the proposal was funded. Representatives of all participating agencies met periodically with the executive staff and governing board during the 1987-88 school year to discuss the nature of the long-term agenda for

the Center. After several months of deliberations regarding possible objectives of the Ohio program, it was decided that two particularly appropriate areas to be explored by the Center were the following:

1. The need to recruit women and minority educators to the field of educational administration.
2. The development of strategies that might be followed by local school systems across Ohio as they move toward compliance with the new Entry Year Standard of the Ohio Department of Education.

Task forces were formed to examine each of these two major areas. In the summer of 1988, two Associate Directors were named to the executive staff of the Ohio LEAD Center. One individual was made responsible for the minority and women educator recruitment focus, while the second Associate Director was made primarily responsible for activities associated with the Entry Year Standard.

To date, the work related to the Entry Year Standard has revolved primarily around two specific tasks. First, a Resource Guide has been developed to assist those who will be responsible for the implementation of entry year programs in local school systems across the state of Ohio (Daresh & Playko, 1989). Second, training activities designed to prepare individuals who wish to learn more about the concept of mentoring for administrators--a key ingredient in the Entry Year Standard--are being carried out around the state

during the spring of this current school year.

Focus and Purposes of the Resource Guide

The Resource Guide developed by the Ohio LEAD Center has been designed to provide planners of professional development programs for school administrators, directors, and supervisors with background information for assistance with the design of programs for school administrators. Many ideas associated with induction programs for classroom teachers may also be helpful to those who use the Resource Guide, and readers might also apply some of what is contained to programs designed essentially for teachers. Nevertheless, there are characteristics of the roles of the school administrator that are unique to the extent that the Resource Guide was developed.

The Resource Guide is not meant to serve as a precise blueprint or cookbook that will offer users all possible answers to all possible questions that might be asked about the implementation of a local entry year program. Rather, the intent is merely to provide broad descriptions of critical issues and concepts that need to be treated in any local program. The overriding view is that the conditions found in each school system are unique, and programs which are designed for use at the local level will only be effective is

they feature activities and programs that reflect local concerns, conditions, and issues.

Content of the Resource Guide

The Resource Guide is comprised of ten chapters, each of which is directed toward an important element of the Ohio Entry Year Standard, along with practices that might be included in any effective local adaptations of the Standard.

The first chapter includes a review of the formal statement of the Ohio Entry Year Standard. This is described so that readers of the Resource Guide would be aware of legal requirements, but more importantly, be provided with a viewpoint which suggests that an effective entry year program will always strive to go beyond the minimal expectations of the state Standard.

Chapter 2 provides background information relative to the needs of beginning school administrators as the group that is to be served through the Resource Guide and the Entry Year Standard. The chapter begins with a review of recent research on beginning school administrators. It is noted that, while there has not been a rich tradition of research into the problems faced by newcomers to the world of school administration, what is known tends to provide some fairly clear and consistent themes. These themes include the fact

that neophytes need to receive a great deal of "hands on" learning opportunities to acquire some of the critical skills needed by effective school administrators. Second, local entry year programs need to stress the development of strong norms of collegiality within those who are taking their first administrative jobs so that there can be a realization that a school administrator will rarely be successful by trying to "go at it alone." Third, entry year programs must include a component wherein people are able to test some of their fundamental assumptions and beliefs concerning the nature of power, authority, and leadership as they step into principalships or some other administrative roles. The chapter concludes with a description of a number of additional frameworks that might be used to identify some of the most essential skills that need to be demonstrated by beginning school administrators.

The third chapter provides a review of some of the critical issues that need to be considered in the preparation of comprehensive programs for the professional development of all school administrators. Included are descriptions of features of effective preservice preparation programs, induction activities, and ongoing inservice education opportunities for practicing school leaders. Five generic models for the delivery of administrator inservice are included, and the various strengths and limitations of each of these

models are considered.

The next chapter provides a statement and description of a planning model that might be used by those at the local level who have been delegated the responsibility for developing an entry year program. The suggested model is an adaptation of a similar process developed by the Ohio Department of Education to assist planners of local inservice and staff development programs. This model consists of nine steps:

1. Establish a school board policy on entry year programs;
2. Create a planning committee;
3. Conduct a preliminary needs assessment;
4. Specify goals and objectives;
5. Identify requisite resources;
6. Design the program;
7. Develop a budget;
8. Implement the program;
9. Evaluate the program.

The fifth chapter is devoted to a consideration of some special issues that are likely to be faced by planners of local entry year programs for school administrators. For example, there is a review of who the entry year administrator must be, both according to the state department Standard as well as the needs of the local school district. Next, there is a consideration of precisely who should

serve as a mentor. Finally, necessary local commitments are examined as they may apply to the implementation of effective local entry year programs. The two most important issues considered here are commitment to professional development and incentives.

Chapter 6 provides a deeper review of the definition of mentoring as a central feature of an entry year program. Background information on mentoring is specified, along with a consideration of the various types of mentors that might be found in many different organizations. The chapter also includes a summary of characteristics of effective mentors who have worked with other aspiring and beginning school administrators. Finally, potential problems in mentoring are also noted. Additional information concerning the use of mentors as part of administrative induction programs is provided in another publication, Administrative Mentoring: A Training Manual (Daresh & Playko, 1989). This document is noted in the Reference section of this paper, and it is available from the Center for Educational Leadership at the University of Northern Colorado.

The next chapter looks at the corresponding issue of the desirable characteristics to be demonstrated by proteges. Characteristics of proteges are listed, along with a statement of the types of behaviors that are necessary to serve as the foundation for

effective mentor-protege relationships. Benefits to proteges are noted, and there is also a description of some of the processes that might be utilized in matching mentors and their proteges.

Training for mentors is the central issue discussed in Chapter 9 of the Resource Guide. Included are some fundamental assumptions that are related to the design of any effective training programs:

> Any system undertaking the establishment of a mentoring program to assist beginning administrators will take steps to establish trust and openness among the administrators of the district, will invest sufficient resources to support a mentoring program, will develop and maintain open and honest communication patterns, and will show awareness and sensitivity to the unique learning needs of adults.

This chapter also includes a consideration of the skills needed for effective mentoring. These include observation skills, problem-solving skills, and conferencing skills. Finally, there is an examination of the knowledge base that might be consulted as part of programs for supporting beginning school administrators. Issues included here are such things as research related to effective schools, research on instructional leadership, and a review of some of the ways that might be used in developing a professional identity among school administrators.

The last chapter of the Resource Guide describes a process that

may be followed in evaluating a local entry year program. The relationship between evaluation and decision making is considered, along with the characteristics of effective program evaluation. Types of evaluative measures are also reviewed, along with a description of a generic model that may be consulted as additional program evaluation procedures are developed.

Summary

This paper provided a brief overview of the content and objectives of a document recently prepared by the Ohio LEAD Center as a way to support local efforts by school systems as they prepare to implement entry year programs for beginning school administrators. As similar programs are mandated across the nation, the material included in A Resource Guide: The Administrative Entry Year Program in Ohio may serve as a useful model to be followed in other settings. We conclude by offering one strong word of caution, however. Simply stated, any effort to develop an entry year program must be consistent with the needs dictated by local conditions. We may offer a pattern to be considered, but any similar effort must be based on a design that is unique to a particular setting.

References

Daresh, John C.; Conran, Patricia A.; & Playko, Marsha A. (1989, March). Mentoring for Leadership Development. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting for the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Orlando, FL.

Daresh, John C., & Playko, Marsha A. (1989). The Administrative Entry Year Program in Ohio: A Resource Guide. Westerville, OH: The Ohio LEAD Center.

Daresh, John C., & Playko, Marsha A. (1989). Administrative Mentoring: A Training Manual. Greeley, CO: Center for Educational Leadership, University of Northern Colorado.

FIGURE 1. Components of the Ohio Entry Year Standard.

APPENDIX

THE OHIO ENTRY YEAR STANDARD

(A) DEFINITIONS

(1) "Entry Year Program" means a program of support provided by a school district pursuant to this rule to meet the unique needs of an individual in the first year of employment under a classroom teaching certificate or an educational personnel certificate.

(2) "Mentor" means a person assigned to provide professional support to an individual in the first year of employment under a classroom teaching certificate or an educational personnel certificate.

(B) REQUIREMENTS FOR AN ENTRY YEAR PROGRAM FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS AND EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL. THE ENTRY YEAR PROGRAM SHALL BE IMPLEMENTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ADOPTED POLICIES WHICH ADDRESS PARAGRAPHS (B) (1) TO (8) OF THIS RULE.

(1) Organization

(a) A statement of assurance, signed by the superintendent of the school district and filed with the Ohio Department of Education, shall indicate that the entry year program is provided in accordance with this rule for each person in the first year of employment under a classroom teaching certificate or an educational personnel certificate.

(b) A cooperative entry year program may be established with other school districts, provided the program is approved by the board of education of each participating school district.

(c) Provisions shall be made for the participation of currently employed experienced teachers in the planning of components of the entry year program which directly affect entry year classroom teachers.

(d) Provisions shall be made for the participation of currently employed experienced educational personnel in the planning of components of the entry year program which directly affect entry year persons employed under educational personnel certificates.

(e) Provisions may be made for the participation of one or more agencies, consultants, professional associations, and teacher preparation institutions in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the entry year program.

(f) Criteria and procedures for selecting and assigning mentors shall be included in the plan for the entry year program.

(g) A description of the entry year program shall be on file at the office of the superintendent of the school district.

(h) At least one full-time equivalent mentor shall be assigned for each fourteen full-time equivalent first-year individuals employed under a classroom teaching certificate or an educational personnel certificate.

(2) Structure

(a) Each entry year person shall be assigned a mentor for a period of one school year.

(b) Each entry year person shall be given an initial orientation on the following matters: (i) the pupils and the community to be served; (ii) school policies, procedures, and routines; (iii) courses of study, competency-based education programs, and responsibilities for lesson plans; (iv) the layout and facilities of the assigned school building or buildings; (v) the nature of the entry year program which will be provided; and (vi) additional information an entry year person may need to be adequately prepared for a specific assignment.

(c) Each entry year classroom teacher shall be provided with the following: (i) assistance in acquiring knowledge of the school curriculum, responsibilities for implementing that curriculum and the instructional resources available for such implementation; (ii) assistance with management tasks identified as especially difficult for entry year classroom teachers; and (iii) assistance in the improvement of instructional skills and classroom management.

(d) Educational personnel shall be provided ongoing assistance, with such assistance differentiated to provide for professional needs related to the specific assignment.

(e) A mentor assigned to an entry year classroom teacher or teachers shall be employed under a classroom teaching certificate, unless otherwise agreed to by the entry year classroom teacher or teachers.

(f) A mentor assigned to an entry year person or persons employed under a specific educational personnel certificate shall hold a similar educational personnel certificate, unless otherwise agreed to by the entry year person or persons.

(g) Mentors shall possess the following eligibility requirements: (i) experience and certification appropriate to the assignment of the entry year person or persons; (ii) knowledge, skills, attitudes, or values deemed essential for becoming an effective mentor.

(h) Mentors shall be provided with the following: (i) an orientation to mentoring responsibilities; (ii) training in knowledge and skills necessary to perform mentoring responsibilities; and (iii) opportunities to consult with and otherwise assist the assigned entry year person or persons on a regular basis, with adequate time within the instructional day allocated for such consultation and assistance.

(3) Evaluation and Revision

(a) The school district shall evaluate the entry year program at least every five years. Program administrators, mentors, and entry year persons shall be involved in the evaluation.

(b) Program revisions shall be documented through the attachment of an addendum to the original program plan or through the creation of a new program plan.

(4) An on-site evaluation of the entry year program shall be conducted once every five years by the Department of Education to determine compliance with this rule.